

SEATTLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2009 (6-8 p.m.)

City Hall, Boards and Commission Room

1. Call to order and introductions

SPAB members in attendance: Seth Schromen-Wawrin, Tom Williams (Chair), Kristen Lohse, Celeste Gilman, Jon Morgan, Ben Smith, Mark Bandy (Vice-Chair), Christina Bollo, Wendy Cho-Ripp (Incoming Get Engaged), Leanne Do (Outgoing Get Engaged)

Absent: T. Frick, Howard Wu (Secretary), Vanessa Lund, Brian Dougherty (SDOT Liaison), Lindsay Pesheck (SBAB liaison to SPAB)

Presenters: Lisa Quinn (Feet First), Brian Holloway (SDOT), George Frost (SDOT),

| Guests: Jacob Struiksma, Doug Beemanis

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Mark made a motion to approve the July minutes, the motion was seconded by Jon, and all approved.

4. Feet First Presentation (Lisa Quinn, Exec. Director, Feet First)

Lisa Quinn began by talking about how Feet First recently completed a three-year strategic plan, which includes goals for community engagement. Tactics for reaching that goal include a new “walking ambassadors” program. Details about the program:

- Volunteer effort, includes training and a specific curriculum
- 8 people trained to date
- Recent walk in Ballard drew 45 people, ended with pizza
- Group of architects leading walks in Capitol Hill
- Program is publicized through Feet First press releases
- Another training will take place in the fall.

Lisa also talked about the upcoming PARKing Day, September 18th, which was organized by Elaine Boyd. The event was initiated by the Rebar Group Art Collection in San Francisco, and has since been carried out every year in other cities. Details about this year's PARKing Day:

- Most downtown sites to be located around the Seattle Art Museum
- Feet First coordinated permitting through SDOT
- Map on Feet First website
- Feet First would like to streamline the permitting process.

Discussion:

How was walk in Ballard publicized? Is there a focus on East Ballard? (Mark)

Finding ambassadors is a challenge

Councilman Licata's walk on privately owned public spaces was thought provoking --

what about “repurposing” other public rights-of-way that are being used privately (or neglected) for PARKing Day, such as street ends, alleys, etc. (Mark)

Focus of PARKing Day has been to show streets are public space, that doesn't necessarily have to be dedicated to automobile use, to challenge the status quo and imagine a different use of the space

Permitting details (Seth)

- *3 years ago, Feet First applied for single permits for each PARKing Day space. This year they submitted 1 permit for all spaces.*
- *Last year there were 29 applications, this year 30 (15 near Seattle Art Museum).*
- *Permit price was \$250 for 30 space - \$19 per space per day, or \$37 for arterials + permitting fees and barricade rental, same as would be charged for construction of film crew.*
- *Length and challenge of permitting process takes away spontaneous feel of the event, but requires a paradigm shift in how the City views the event.*

5. Mountains to Sound Green Way Presentation (Brian Holloway, SDOT)

Brian introduced the Mountains to Sound Greenway as 100-mile long corridor, with seven missing links. This missing link project is a collaborative effort among several agencies including SDOT, responsible for funding, outreach, maintenance; WSDOT and Seattle Parks, responsible for funding and land acquisition.

The City is currently working to complete the missing link from Amazon.com headquarters in Beacon Hill to Holgate, adjacent to I-5, a distance of about 1 mile.

- Project is at 60% design level, and environmental documentation/permitting is underway, WSDOT is doing design.
- Right-of-way acquisition is a hurdle.
- Construction planned for April—through summer of 2010.
- Funded through Pro Parks levy funds, along with federal funds obtained through the Puget Sound Regional Council, in addition to WSDOT and SDOT.
- Project site includes Jose Rizal Park, which includes the largest dog park in the City. Site is steep, with heavy clay soils.
- WSDOT requires access to I-5 through the site for bridge inspection and parks maintenance.
- Site is also a popular place for encampments, making police supervision necessary for safety.
- Design proposal is for a 12 wide trail within a 3 wide corridor, with 6' black-coated chain link fence along both sides of the corridor, for safety.
- Trail will be lit with 30' cobra-head style luminaires, rather than pedestrian-scale lighting, to subvert vandalism, increase safety, and discourage encampments with higher light levels. Luminaires will be placed every 40'. In addition, they can be wired overhead, which will minimize grading.
- Project budget is \$2 million.

Discussion:

Why was this route chosen? What about a planned bridge over I-5 in the vicinity? What is the value of a terminus at Holgate, which is very busy? (Ben and Mark)

- The project is intended to make long-term connections to the future East Link Light Trail, but is seen as an interim solution. The official terminus of the

Mountains to Sound Greenway project is Alki, so at the trail needs to head west across I-5 at some point.

- There are existing sidewalks on the north side of Holgate, though it is steep.
- The project will cross I-5 and tie in the SR 519 project.

If crime prevention through environmental design is the goal, why this route? (Seth)

- Route to Holgate is considered better than 12th and Jackson or King because it allows a separated multi-use trail, rather than an on-road facility. An urban forest experience is preferred to an urban experience, which is what the route through International District would be.

Another crossing of I-5 may not happen. If it doesn't are there plans for improving Holgate for pedestrians? And what would be the outcome if the SR 519 project closes access across the tracks? (Mark)

Not known.

Is the Mountains to Sound Greenway Foundation offering any funding? (Mark)

No.

Emergency phones with blue lights would be a good addition to increase safety. (Celeste)

6. Round Robin

Ben reported on the Tri-Party Committee Meeting (freight, pedestrian, and bike communities) attended by Grace Crunican.

He reported that Darby Watson, an urban designer, will be working on a design for Dearborn; the streetscape will not include decreased freight capacity.

Ben also attended a recent meeting of the Sound Transit Bicycle Advisory Group. He said the ST 2 plan will have a strong emphasis on flexible access to stations.

Jon has been working with the 43rd District Democrats, and volunteering with Transportation Choices Coalition.

Celeste reported that the signals group at SDOT is reviewing the Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP). She is working on organizing UW's Walk to School Day, and is recruiting walk leaders.

Seth is also working on International Walk to School Day and safe routes to school and has also been involved with Feet First's Northeast Trails (NEST) project and encouraged people to come to the next meeting on 9/29 at the Northgate Public Library. The NEST project is part of the Neighborhoods on Foot series, and includes the headwaters of Thornton Creek, and will show where public access is available along the creek. Ground surveys will be taking place in the winter for proposed improvements and way finding. Similar efforts are taking place in southwest Seattle. Finally he encouraged all to attend the City budget hearing on 10/7.

Leanne thanked SPAB members for her great experience on the board and introduced the new Get Engaged Member, Wendy Cho-Ripp.

Italicized comments are paraphrased versions of actual discussion. When known, comments have been attributed to specific individuals.

Wendy introduced herself and talked about her work at Washington Bus, which is an organization that gets young people involved in democracy.

Kristen talked about her work with Great City Initiative, which has a campaign called Streets for People that is aimed at making city streets more livable.

Mark reported on enjoying being out on the neighborhood streets with his kids.

Tom talked about the city budget. The city is facing a shortfall of \$72 million due to sharp drop in sales tax and B. & O. tax. Real estate tax revenues have rebounded a little bit, but are nowhere near the level that they were in 2005-2007. He attended a recent Bridging the Gap meeting. The City Council sent a letter to the Mayor regarding their priorities. In the letter, they included two requests of interest to SPAB: dedicated funding for the Pedestrian Master Plan and support for the plan to increase SPD patrol officers.

He also reported on the 45th Street Viaduct project. Michael Ward, SDOT project manager said that the full closure option was approved and there will be project open house in October.

Next month's meeting will feature Doug Cox on sidewalk project prioritization and Barbara Gray on the next steps of the ped. Plan, which is going to the full City Council on 9/21.

Finally, Tom proposed moving the board's November meeting to 11/18 as the regular November meeting date is a City holiday.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.